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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 4036th meeting of the Security Council, held on 24 August 1999 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Angola", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses its deep concern at the deteriorating political, military and humanitarian situation in Angola, at the suffering of the people and at the dramatic increase in the number of internally displaced persons, which has now reached well over two million people, not including the unknown number of internally displaced persons in areas which are currently inaccessible to humanitarian agencies.

"The Security Council reiterates that the primary cause of the current crisis in Angola is the failure by the leadership of the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) to comply with its obligations under the Lusaka Protocol, and again demands that UNITA comply immediately and without conditions with its obligations to demilitarize and permit the extension of state administration to areas under its control. It reaffirms its belief that lasting peace and national reconciliation can only be achieved through political dialogue.

"The Security Council expresses its concern at the critical condition of the internally displaced persons who suffer from lack of food, medicines, shelter, arable land and other necessities. The Council further expresses its grave concern at the number of malnourished children and at the outbreak of diseases such as polio and meningitis due to the lack of access to clean water and hygiene. In this regard the Council commends the excellent work by the Government of Angola and the United Nations system in their efforts towards the eradication of diseases in Angola. The Council also expresses its concern at the plight of those vulnerable groups, such as children, women, the elderly and the handicapped, who are particularly at risk and in need of special assistance.

"The Security Council expresses its concern that the continuing conflict in Angola has increased the cost of humanitarian assistance. It notes the insufficient level of contributions to the 1999 United Nations

Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola and reiterates its appeal to the donor community to contribute generously, financially and in kind, to the humanitarian appeal to enable the agencies to address effectively the plight of the internally displaced persons. The Council welcomes the announcement by the Government of Angola of an Emergency Plan for Humanitarian Assistance.

"The Security Council also expresses its concern that the continuing conflict and lack of access jeopardize the ability of the agencies to continue to deliver assistance to those in need. The Council urges the Government of Angola and particularly UNITA to provide access to all internally displaced persons in Angola, and to facilitate the mechanisms necessary for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to all populations in need throughout the country. The Council urges both parties, particularly UNITA, to guarantee the safety and security and freedom of movement of humanitarian personnel, including United Nations and associated personnel, providing assistance to internally displaced persons. The Council strongly urges respect for the principle of neutrality and impartiality in the delivery of assistance. The Council commends the determination and courage of those working to relieve human suffering in Angola, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Food Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund and other agencies.

"The Security Council urges both parties to ensure full respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. In this connection, the Council urges UNITA to cease committing atrocities, including killing civilians and attacking humanitarian aid workers, and demands the release of all foreign citizens, including the Russian aircrews, held by UNITA. It expresses its concern at reports of re-mining activities as well as the laying of mines in new areas in the country.

"The Security Council will remain actively seized of the matter."